

مركز الأخبار

Egyptian-Israeli trade talks end

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian and Israeli officials concluded three days of talks Wednesday saying they were optimistic that bilateral trade, frozen last year after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, would soon resume. Israel's chief delegate, Avraham Ashery, told reporters after a six-hour session: "We are confident that practical results of these talks will be felt in the near future." Egypt's deputy minister for foreign trade, Ahmad Wafaa Al Din, also expressed optimism on the outcome of the talks. Trade ties, along with other moves to normalise relations between the two countries, were frozen by Egypt in protest at Israel's military action. Mr. Ashery said Egypt, the only Arab country to sign a treaty with Israel, had indicated it intended "to facilitate trade with Israel."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جوردان تايمز - جوردان تايمز - جوردان تايمز

2 Israeli officers killed near Beirut

TEL AVIV (R) — Two Israeli army officers were killed Wednesday when their vehicle hit a landmine near Beirut on the road to Damascus, an Israeli army spokesman said. The incident occurred near the town of Kahlale and Israeli soldiers were searching the area, the spokesman added. Earlier, Lebanese security sources in Beirut said a rocket-propelled grenade had destroyed an Israeli car in the same area.

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'Norway helped Sweden identify NATO sub'

STOCKHOLM (R) — Top Norwegian naval officers helped Sweden identify one of a number of submarines intruding in Swedish waters last October as a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) vessel, the business newspaper Dagens Industri said Wednesday. Norway is a member of the North Atlantic alliance. Sweden is neutral. On Tuesday, Dagens Industri quoted what it called well informed Swedish and foreign defence sources as saying hydrophone signals emitted by one of the submarines showed it was from an unspecified NATO country.

Soviet navy recovers fallen 'satellite'

CANBERRA (R) — Soviet navy ships Wednesday recovered from the Indian Ocean what Australian defence officials believe was a military satellite. The officials said the satellite splashed down 300 miles south of the Cocos Islands, off Australia's west coast. It was taken aboard by the Soviet frigate, which included two guided missile destroyers, three support ships and a missile range instrumentation vessel. Australia's air force and navy monitored the vessels as they sailed for the satellite to splash down Wednesday morning, defence officials said.

Cheysson ends visit to Algiers

PARIS (R) — French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson left Algiers Tuesday after a short visit to talks with Algerian President Chadli Benjedid and his foreign minister, Ahmad Taleb Ibrahim. Diplomatic sources said one of Mr. Cheysson's main reasons for the visit was to convince Algeria to attend a conference of Western Mediterranean countries proposed by France.

Libyan cargo plane crashes near Tripoli

ANKARA (R) — A Libyan cargo airplane crashed in a sandstorm near Tripoli on Monday killing all five crew aboard, Turkish state radio reported Wednesday. Two Turks, Pilot Aydin Tekkok and Flight Engineer Yalcin Altin, were among the dead. The others were two Libyans and one Briton. The plane, a Boeing 707 belonging to the Libyan charter company United African Airlines, was carrying meat from Ankara to Sabha, in southern Libya, and crashed on its return journey, the radio said.

Ankara demands death penalty for 17

ISTANBUL (R) — The death penalty was demanded for four defendants when 17 alleged members of an extreme leftist faction went on trial in an Istanbul court Wednesday. The 17, said by the prosecution to belong to a group called the Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Union-Progressive Liberation Organisation, were accused of murder, armed robbery and membership of an illegal group. All but one are in detention.

INSIDE

- Siberia — the land of high wages and adventure, page 2
- ALO to outline working programme for West Bank, page 3
- U.S. nuclear freeze movement takes stubborn roots, page 4
- Japanese religious sect seeks to abolish abortion, page 5
- Amman revives Indian hopes in West Indies, page 6
- New budget gives modest boost to Britons, page 7
- U.S. bars Libyans from aviation, nuclear studies, page 8

Shamir returns to Israel with new proposals

Reagan assures Lebanon of continued U.S. efforts for Israeli withdrawal

WASHINGTON (R) — Lebanon's special envoy met President Reagan Wednesday and said he was given an assurance that the United States would press efforts to secure the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon.

Saeed Salam, a former Lebanese prime minister who has participated in four days of Washington talks involving U.S., Israeli and Lebanese officials, quoted Mr. Reagan as saying "I have no reverse gear" in American policy.

Reiterating his government's refusal to have a continuing Israeli presence in Lebanon, Mr. Salam said "he (Mr. Reagan) is going ahead. He wants Lebanon on its feet again."

A senior Reagan administration official meanwhile told reporters there had been progress but no breakthrough in the talks, which also included meetings between the president and Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Mr. Shamir, who saw Mr. Reagan on Monday, returned to Israel Tuesday saying he was taking back new ideas on monitoring "security" in southern Lebanon.

The senior official who briefed reporters said U.S. envoys Philip Habib and Morris Draper would return to the Middle East this

weekend with instructions to try to "wrap it up" and win an agreement for withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon.

He said the United States believed Syrian and Palestinian forces would leave along with the Israelis but not before Lebanon reached an accord with Israel.

Mr. Salam was accompanied to the White House by Lebanese Foreign Minister Elie Salem, who declined to add to remarks made to reporters by Mr. Salam.

The major issue in this week's Washington talks and in protracted negotiations in Lebanon and Israel has been Israel's demand for "security arrangements" in southern Lebanon.

Israel has proposed joint Israeli-Lebanese patrols and observation stations and Mr. Shamir spoke repeatedly in Washington of the need for close cooperation on security between the two countries.

The United States wants a total pullback of Israeli troops, who

invaded Lebanon last June.

The U.S. official said the Reagan administration believed the Lebanese army was capable of guaranteeing security in southern Lebanon.

But he underlined U.S. willingness to consider the idea of expanding the current multinational force in Beirut, composed of troops from the United States, Italy, France and Britain, for duty in the south.

Mr. Salam, asked if U.S. Marines would be sent to southern Lebanon, replied: "That is a question that is hanging."

He said President Reagan assured the Lebanese delegation he would still pursue his policy "of trying to give all help to free Lebanon of all occupying forces and also to help Lebanon to get reconstructed by its government."

"We cannot have anything that infringes on the sovereignty of Lebanon," Mr. Salam said. "No foreign troops in occupation, no Israeli troops. No other troops."



His Majesty King Hussein speaks with Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Lt. Gen. Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker before his departure to Bonn Wednesday (Petra photo)

King arrives in Bonn

BONN (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein arrived here for a one-day working visit and was received at the airport by Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher.

The King is scheduled to hold talks with President Karl Carstens, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Mr. Genscher, in addition to other senior West German officials.

West Germany is the current chairman of the European Economic Community and Bonn officials have said that Jordan's role in future Middle East peace talks will be discussed at the EEC summit in Brussels next Monday.

The King, who is due in London at the head of an Arab delegation Friday, is accompanied by Royal Court Chief Ahmad Al Lawzi, Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem, and several senior officials.

The Arab delegation is expected to explain to the British government an Arab peace plan for the Middle East, adopted at the

Fez summit last September.

The mission has already visited the four other permanent members of the U.N. Security Council—the U.S., France, the Soviet Union and China.

The mission's visit to London was earlier called off after British ministers refused to receive a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official as one of its seven members.

Palestinian sources and British officials said the Palestinians would be represented in London by an academic, Dr. Walid Al Khalidi, who is not a PLO member.

Crown Prince Hassan was sworn in as the Regent before the King's departure.

The King was seen off at Amman Airport by His Highness Prince Mohammad, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, senior army officers as well as the West German and British ambassador in Jordan.

Another letter bomb defused near Thatcher home

LONDON (R) — A letter bomb addressed to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's official residence was discovered for the second day running Wednesday, police said.

The bomb Wednesday was detected in a London postal sorting office. Like one delivered to Mrs. Thatcher's 10 Downing Street residence Tuesday it was safely defused.

Another letter bomb sent to the U.S. Navy's European headquarters in London Tuesday burst into flames while being opened, slightly injuring a chief petty officer.

A police spokesman said after Wednesday's discovery: "The device is now being examined. So far it looks very similar to yesterday's device."

Police said there is evidence linking the letters with devices sent recently to the U.S. and Soviet embassies and to two Soviet offices in London.

But it was not known who was behind the bombs, the police spokesman said.

Britain unveils new battle tank amid protests

LONDON (R) — Dozens of peace campaigners chanted slogans Wednesday outside a factory where Britain unveiled a powerful new battle tank before military attaches of 30 nations.

The first 60-tonne Challenger main battle tank was handed over to the British army at Barnbow Royal Ordnance Factory in Leeds before 500 guests, including officials of countries Britain hopes will become customers.

Police said the bulk of the demonstrators were from the women's peace campaign that has sprung up at the Greenham Common American Airbase where nuclear cruise missiles are due to be sited.

About 40 women tried Tuesday night to halt buses relaying guests from Leeds railway station to their hotels but police cleared the roadway without making arrests.

British defence chiefs regard the Challenger, with its computerised 120-millimetre gun and super-strong Chobham armour, as a match for any tank or anti-tank weapon in the world.

About 300 will be built at a cost of £1.5 million (\$2.3 million) each and Britain plans to equip a whole armoured division based in West Germany with them by 1985.

5 women protesters injured

Israeli troops open fire on Sidon demonstrators

SIDON, Lebanon (R) — Eyewitnesses said five women were wounded Wednesday when Israeli troops fired on a Palestinian student demonstration in this South Lebanese port, but the Israelis denied there were any casualties.

The demonstrators were demanding the release of prisoners at Ansar camp in South Lebanon, where the Israelis are holding 5,500 Palestinians and Lebanese arrested since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon last year.

The witnesses said the Israelis used tear gas to disperse the demonstrators as they tried to cross a barbed wire barrier and head for the Israeli military headquarters in Sidon.

When the protesters replied with stones, injuring an Israeli soldier in the head, the Israelis opened fire. Five women suffering mainly from leg wounds were taken to hospital, the witnesses said.

But an Israeli military spokesman near Beirut said Israeli troops fired only in the air, and added: "There is no record of any

casualty in this incident."

The demonstration appeared to be one of the most concerted since the Israeli army overran the southern third of Lebanon in June.

Local residents said the marchers later returned to 'Ain Al Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp, where they set fire to tyres and blocked the camp road.

The Israelis tightened security around their headquarters, and barred even Lebanese security forces from parking nearby.

Later, an Israeli military spokesman said one woman was shot and wounded, and three others were injured in other ways, when Israeli troops opened fire to the demonstration.

The spokesman said a 20-year-old woman was wounded by a bullet in the leg and would be in hospital for a few days.

Three other women would be discharged Thursday, he said. "One had fallen and hurt her knee, one had been cut by a wire fence, and the third had inhaled smoke," he said.

Iranian rebels outline new seven-point plan to end Iran-Iraq war

PARIS (R) — Members of the Paris-based Iranian National Council of Resistance (NCR) Wednesday announced a seven-point plan for ending the two-and-a-half year war between Iran and Iraq.

A spokesman for the council, which groups various Iranian exile organisations and personalities, including former President Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr and Mullahs, said the plan had been put to the United Nations, the non-aligned states, the Iraqi government and the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

He said it followed six months of meetings between members of the council and one in January between Mr. Rajavi and Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi vice premier.

The plan calls for an immediate ceasefire, the setting up of a supervisory committee headed by the U.N. secretary general of a mutually acceptable body, a withdrawal of forces to borders defined under the 1975 treaty between the two countries, exchange of prisoners, the arbitration of

damages by the International Court of Justice, guarantees of repatriation of refugees, and the drawing up of an indefinite peace treaty.

The spokesman said the council, the main opposition to Tehran's clerical leadership, wanted to bring the plan to the attention of the Iranian and Iraqi people. But he would not say if it had been communicated to the Tehran government.

The council said it had decided to recognise the 1975 accord signed by Iran and Iraq at the time of the Shah as a basis for borders between the two countries.

It said prisoners of war should be exchanged within three months of the ceasefire under International Red Cross supervision.

On the question of refugees, the council said both countries should proclaim a general amnesty to allow people to return to their homes.

The movement has frequently condemned the war against Iraq, saying that Tehran had used it as a way of diverting attention from pressing problems at home.

Dutch premier says Reagan may ease stand in arms talks

WASHINGTON (R) — President Reagan might consider a compromise in the European nuclear arms talks although he has not abandoned his "zero option" proposal, according to Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers.

The suggestion of a compromise came on the eve of Wednesday's vote in the House of Representatives on a resolution urging a freeze on U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons.

The house was expected to approve the resolution despite Mr. Reagan's efforts to kill it. He told 24 house members Tuesday that a freeze resolution would make arms control progress "difficult, if not impossible."

Mr. Lubbers said after meeting the president Tuesday that "I got the strong impression that he is interested in working out something fruitful in a negotiating process."

"Mr. Reagan has not abandoned the zero option," he added, referring to the president's proposal that all medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe be scrapped or cancelled.

Mr. Lubbers also said Mr. Reagan had not used the term "interim solution" but did suggest the possibility of a compromise, short-term arrangement under which both the Soviet Union and the United States would deploy some medium-range weapons.

White House press spokesman Larry Speakes also indicated that Washington was reviewing its position at the Geneva talks.

He appeared to open the door to a possible Reagan compromise to meet calls from West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Italian Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo and other allied leaders for flexibility.

Strauss' quest for power sparks coalition in-fight

BONN (R) — West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl was locked in battle over posts and policies with right-wing leader Franz Josef Strauss Wednesday as an open power struggle developed over the future shape of his coalition government.

The Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU), sister party of Mr. Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU), demanded that Mr. Strauss, its leader, be allowed to take his pick of cabinet jobs.

The call, published in the CSU newspaper Bayernkurier as the third round of coalition talks began, angered Christian Democratic officials who said the CSU leader's public bid for power was becoming increasingly embarrassing and unseemly.

The 67-year-old Bavarian leader Wednesday submitted a long paper demanding changes in foreign policy strongly opposed by Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who leads Mr. Kohl's Free Democratic (FDP) junior coalition partners.

The FDP has insisted Mr. Genscher keep his job despite the ambitions of Mr. Strauss. Conservative newspapers reported bitter exchanges between Mr. Strauss and Mr. Kohl in the closed-door talks, which the CDU and CSU began on Monday. Talks with the FDP open Thursday.

Speculation on Mr. Strauss' ambitions was fanned by reports, spread by his aides, that he was now angling for the economics ministry, held by Otto Lambsdorff of the FDP.

While in Amman, Mr. Carter

Mr. Carter, who had already visited Egypt, Israel and Jordan on a Middle East study tour, said he felt the situation in the area was worsening.

"This is because of the delay in the withdrawal of the occupying forces from Lebanon, the delay in starting peace talks and the acquisition of land by Israel in the occupied territories," he said.

While in Amman, Mr. Carter

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No changes announced yet in troubled Paris cabinet

PARIS (R) — President Francois Mitterrand Wednesday held his first cabinet meeting since the ruling left's sharp municipal election reverses, with ministers still nervously waiting to learn their fate in a delayed reshuffle.

The extent of the changes was not expected to be known before next week, when the president will go on television to outline a new economic strategy, informed sources said.

Leaky by Mr. Mitterrand's staff had keyed ministers up for a reshuffle Tuesday following a setback for the Socialists and their Communist allies in municipal elections which ended on Sunday.

But presidential spokesman Michel Vauzelle punctured the suspense late in the day by denying that any cabinet reorganisation had been promised.

Ministers at Wednesday's cabinet meeting, which discussed the outcome of the elections, were non-committal about the delay in learning their fate.

Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy, who is among those who could be replaced, said: "My only desire... is to serve the country and President Mitterrand."

One of his possible successors, Industry Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement, told journalists with a shrug: "None of us has a guaranteed job."

In his statement to journalists Tuesday, Mr. Vauzelle said there was "no link within republican institutions between a local vote and

a change or reshuffle in the government."

Similar remarks were made by senior presidential advisor Jacques Attali although he stressed that Mr. Mitterrand would take account of the lessons of the left's electoral rebuff.

Political sources said the president may have decided against quick steps to remodel the cabinet to avoid giving the impression of uncharacteristically precipitate action.

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FEATURES

Siberia: Land of high wages and adventure

By Mark Wood
Reuter

YAKUTSK, Siberia — Despite the hardships, people still come to settle in Yakutsk, capital of Siberia's Yakutia region, one of the coldest inhabited places on earth. They are lured by high wages or a sense of adventure and the population has climbed rapidly to around 200,000.

The authorities do everything they can to encourage them. The city is the centre of development for Yakutia, a region 12 times the size of Britain, rich in gold, diamonds, coal, gas and tin — mostly still unexploited.

Residents have had to adapt to life in a city with nine months of bitter winter and temperatures plunging to minus 60 centigrade (minus 76 Fahrenheit). Outside

they look into each other's faces for the white puffiness which marks the start of frostbite on the cheeks or nose.

Yakutsk's city grave-diggers hazard a rough guess each summer about how many people will die in the coming year and spend a frantic few weeks preparing their last resting places.

Grave-digging in the capital of Eastern Siberia's Yakutia region is limited to between June and September when the top layer of permafrost — permanently frozen subsoil — melts.

With a bravado that comes from battling such extremes, the people of Yakutsk joke about a "heavens" when the thermometer rises to minus 30 centigrade (minus 22 Fahrenheit) in February but even at that temperature the cold poses a constant danger.

To pass by a drunk collapsed in

the street is a criminal offence, but no Siberian would do so anyway. "You do get used to the cold after a while, except when it goes below minus 50 (minus 58 Fahrenheit). At that temperature the ice fog comes down, and it's difficult to breathe," said Nellie Medvedeva, a long-time resident.

The fog, caused by exhaust, breath and heating fumes freezing in midair, paralyses the city, grounding the planes which are the major link with the outside world and halting traffic.

Even at slightly less fearsome temperatures getting around is tricky. Once a car or truck engine is running it is not turned off, and vehicles drive out of the city only in convoys. A breakdown would otherwise mean death.

Mayor Vladislav Shamshin told visiting reporters that construction costs are four times those

in the European part of the country, because houses have to have walls a metre (three feet) thick and triple glazing.

Materials are mostly hauled up the mighty Lena River, 16 kilometres (10 miles) wide at Yakutsk, by barge during the short summer. In winter frozen rivers form the only passable roads.

But the planners' biggest challenge has been the frozen ground. "Permafrost covers half the territory of the Soviet Union and in each area it is different," said Pavel Melnikov, head of Yakutsk's Permafrost Institute.

Where it is "active" the ground is likely to erupt or subside, carrying houses, roads and railway lines with it.

Building was always a problem as the heat from houses melted the soil beneath them and gradually they sank. In the old part of Yak-

utsk log cabins are often submerged up to the first-floor windows.

The answer in Yakutsk has been to build an entire new city on stilts. Concrete piles are drilled deep into the ground and multi-storey blocks built on top of them with up to two metres clearance from the ground to prevent melting.

Another major difficulty is food. Supplies must be brought in by plane and a rationing system limits each resident to less than two kilos (4.4 lb) of meat a month.

Mr. Shamshin said there were attempts to increase farming during the summer months and two local collective already provided enough cabbage and potatoes for most of the year.

Livestock farms are being developed to breed horses as an auxiliary meat source, since cows fare poorly in the cold.

Many of the people who come to Yakutsk return to the warmer west after three or four years, leaving the authorities the constant task of finding new manpower.

Less than a million people live in the entire region, the site of many of the labour camps of Stalin's time. Half the present population are native Yakuts and most of the others Russians.

Settlers soon fall into the island mentality encouraged by the isolation. Although Yakutsk is hundreds of kilometres from any sea they refer to the south and west as the "mainland".

Most people use the six weeks holiday granted to northern workers to escape to the sunny shores of the Black Sea, for even the brief hot Siberian summer offers only mixed comforts.

"There is beautiful, wild coun-

tryside all around and marvellous hunting and fishing," Mrs. Medvedeva said. "But you have to contend the whole time with swarms of vicious mosquitoes and they can make life unbearable."

While most of Yakutsk's inhabitants are linked to mining and exploration, others are dedicated to opening up the secrets of the permafrost.

Staff at the geological institute have already uncovered the remains of mammoths perfectly preserved in the frozen soil and discovered that hunters in the region 13,000 years ago used the ground as a refrigerator to store their meat.

Their findings have led them to the theory that the brown-haired mammoths were wiped out by the hunters and did not become extinct through natural causes.

The biggest modern concern of permafrost experts is to stop mining and building activities destroying the fragile Siberian environment, where a tree can take a century to grow.

In many areas only a thin layer of soil covers a thick sheet of ice and disturbances can turn whole areas into a frozen desert.

But scientists have come to regard the permafrost as more of a friend than an enemy.

"This is an arid area and without the permafrost there would be no moisture for topsoil vegetation at all. The whole of Siberia would be either an expanse of emptiness or covered in glaciers like Greenland," Dr. Melnikov said.

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HOME NEWS

Lower oil prices to save Jordan \$84m in 1983

AMMAN (J.T.) — OPEC's decision to lower oil prices from \$34 to \$29 a barrel will reduce Jordan's oil bill by 15 per cent, according to the Jordanian daily Sawt Al Shaab quoting an informed source at the Ministry of Finance.

It said that Jordan is expected to consume 20 million barrels of oil in 1983 and, with the reduction in the price of oil, the country will therefore pay \$100 million less. In effect the country will pay

\$84 million less for the last ten months of this year if OPEC's new prices are brought into being as of March 1, the paper said.

According to the source, the government's subsidy on domestic oil prices amounted to JD 58 million before the recent increase in fuel prices in Jordan, dropping to JD 50 million after it. When OPEC's prices come into force, the source added, the government's subsidy will drop to JD 21 million.

Qasem to lead team to Tunis Afro-Arab committee meeting

TUNIS (Petra) — Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem will lead Jordan's delegation to the meeting of the Afro-Arab cooperation standing committee which will open in Tunis Monday. The meeting will be attended by foreign ministers from 24 Arab and African countries.

During the two-day meeting delegates will discuss ways to bolster Afro-Arab cooperation in the political, economic, financial and cultural fields. Mr. Qasem and other Arab foreign ministers will also hold separate talks before the official meeting.

Interest rates reduced

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Central Bank of Jordan has issued instructions to local commercial banks reducing interest rates on customers' deposits. From now on interest paid on savings accounts will receive a maximum interest of six per cent. This will rise to 6.5 per cent on a fixed deposit for one month, seven per cent for three months, 7.75 for six months and eight per cent for one year.

According to the instructions, customers will not be allowed to draw on their fixed accounts until the maturity date. If however a customer requests to draw on a fixed deposit, the bank will be allowed to offer that customer credit facilities with the deposit acting as a guarantee. Once the agreement on the deposit account is breached the money will receive a maximum interest of four per cent, the normal rate for current accounts, the instructions said.



Minister of Labour Jawad Al Anani (second from right) presides over the final session of the Arab

Labour Conference which concluded in Amman Wednesday (Petra photo)

ALO resolution to outline W. Bank working terms

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Labour Conference (ALO), which ended in Amman Wednesday, said it will submit a resolution on the conditions of Arab labourers in the occupied Arab territories to the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) 69th meeting in Geneva this June.

A statement issued at the end of the final session said that a special four-nation committee, chaired by Jordan, has been established to draw up this resolution. The committee will also work out a plan to coordinate the Arab lobby before and during the ILO's conference. To this end they also hope to include commemorative Palestine solidarity day with an exhibition of photographs and documents that reveal Israel's inhuman treatment of the Palestinian people.

The conference, which lasted 11 days, called on Arab states to implement the agreements on labourers, social services and pay. It

also endorsed a pan-Arab project for developing skilled labour, approved in principle the steps suggested by the executive for implementing a pan-Arab labour strategy and allocated necessary funds for it, the statement said. It also said that the conference adopted a speech by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, as an official policy document.

The conference issued an appeal for an end to the Iraq-Iran war and voiced appreciation of Iraq's readiness to end the fighting. The conference called on all governments, and international organisations to use their influence

with Iran to persuade it to end the war "which only serves imperialist goals in the region and adversely affects its prosperity."

The conference issued an appeal to world governments and organisations to extend support to the Eritrean people's struggle, and assist it in its struggle to attain its legitimate rights to self-determination.

In the closing session Wednesday the delegates discussed a number of clauses in the ALO's budget for 1984, and the budgets for its various branches and agencies. The delegates also heard speeches by the ALO's Director-General Al Hashimi Al Banani, and the heads of the government, employers and trade union groups, as well as the Jordanian Labour Minister Jawad Al Anani.

The conference decided to hold its 12th meeting in May 1984 in the Iraqi capital Baghdad.

Sarvath presents diplomas at Community College

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Highness Princess Sarvath Wednesday attended a ceremony to present diplomas to participants in a training course on educational techniques. The course was held at the University of Jordan, and the graduation ceremony was held at Princess Sarvath Community College.

At the outset of the ceremony, Minister of Education Sa'ad Al Tai made a speech outlining his ministry's interest in developing Jordanian community colleges, and improving the quality of education in Jordan. The Ministry of Education has pledged to develop education in the country during the present decade with the focus of attention on the teacher, who is the essential element in the educational process, the minister said.

Travel agents society to elect new board

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Society of Travel Agents (JSTA) will hold a meeting in Amman Thursday to elect a new board. Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Ma'an Abu Nowar and Tourism Director Michael Hamarneh will attend the meeting, which will also discuss the society's financial and administrative reports, and a future policy programme for the JSTA.

According to JSTA's President Yasser Abu Al Su'ud the participants will review the conditions of various Jordanian travel agencies and will pass resolutions as well as issuing licences for new travel agencies.

Also to be discussed is the establishment of a tourism information fund, Mr. Abu Su'ud said. The participants, he said, will view ways of coordinating their activities with airlines that operate in Jordan with a view to boost tourism.

Chamber receives food supply fair invitation

AMMAN (Petra) — The Amman Chamber of Commerce has received an invitation to participate in an international food supply fair to open in Salonika, Greece on April 17. The chamber circulated copies of the invitation to Jordanian food merchants who might be interested in taking part in the week-long fair.

Labour meeting cables gratitude to Hussein

AMMAN (Petra) — Delegates to the Arab Labour Conference, which has just ended in Amman, Wednesday sent a cable to His Majesty King Hussein expressing gratitude and deep appreciation for his hosting of the conference, and provision of all necessary facilities to achieve success.

The conference, which was chaired by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, had been offered backup facilities by the Jordanian government enabling it to achieve

success and adopt resolutions and recommendations designed to serve the interests of the Arab Nation, the cable said.

According to the cable, Prince Hassan's speech, delivered to the opening session of the conference, "had left a deep impression on all delegates since it diagnosed the present Arab and international situations, and put forward proposals for tackling problems arising in the future."



Stephanie Beacham, as Olivia, John Warner, Malvolio, rehearse a scene from William Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" which opens Thursday for three nights at the Royal Cultural Centre (British Council Photo)

Shakespeare Group to play in Jordan

By A. Rahim Abu-Swailem
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Under the patronage of their Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath, the "London Shakespeare Group", sponsored by the British Council, will present William Shakespeare's romantic comedy "Twelfth Night" at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman Thursday.

The London Shakespeare Group, one of Britain's best known companies, consists of four full-time actors employed by the British Council who, for this play, will be joined by four guest artists. The group has for 15 years been taking Shakespeare's masterpieces to many parts of the world.

The name "London Shakespeare Group" was first adapted by the British Council in 1968, when four actors were invited

to Japan to present shortened classical adaptations. However, the British Council has been sending trained actors around the world since 1963. Under the late Peter Potter's direction, the play "Julius Caesar" was first produced, with groups touring East Africa in 1964 and the West Indies in late 1966 and early 1967.

In the autumn of 1975 Gary Raymond and Delena Kidd toured northern Nigeria with versions of "Macbeth" and the "Merchant of Venice". Two months later, Suzann Farmer and John Fraser took the same two plays to southern Nigeria.

Late in 1976 Raymond and Fraser joined together to produce a version of "Romeo and Juliet" to take on tour to East Africa. Due to the success of this production the group was invited the following year to visit Japan, India, Pakistan and Korea.

In 1978, four actors took four Shakespeare plays to East Africa, Mauritius and the Seychelles. In 1979, another four actors took five different Shakespeare plays to Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and the Middle East.

The group, led by Fraser, Farmer, Kidd and Raymond, has visited 26 countries over the last seven years. John Fraser's production of "Twelfth Night" was first produced on a tour of the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, China and Japan spanning October to December 1982.

In presenting Shakespeare's plays, the group aims to perform with as much clarity and uncluttered narrative as possible. This is designed to help audiences encountering the pieces for the first time, and to achieve a realistic effect given the very limited props available when relying on three mobile trucks.

The group's four guest stars are Stephanie Beacham, Richard Heffer, Richard Howard and Judy Geeson.

The London Shakespeare Group are putting on three performances of "Twelfth Night" from Thursday March 17th to Saturday March 19th inclusive at the Royal Cultural Centre starting at 7 p.m.

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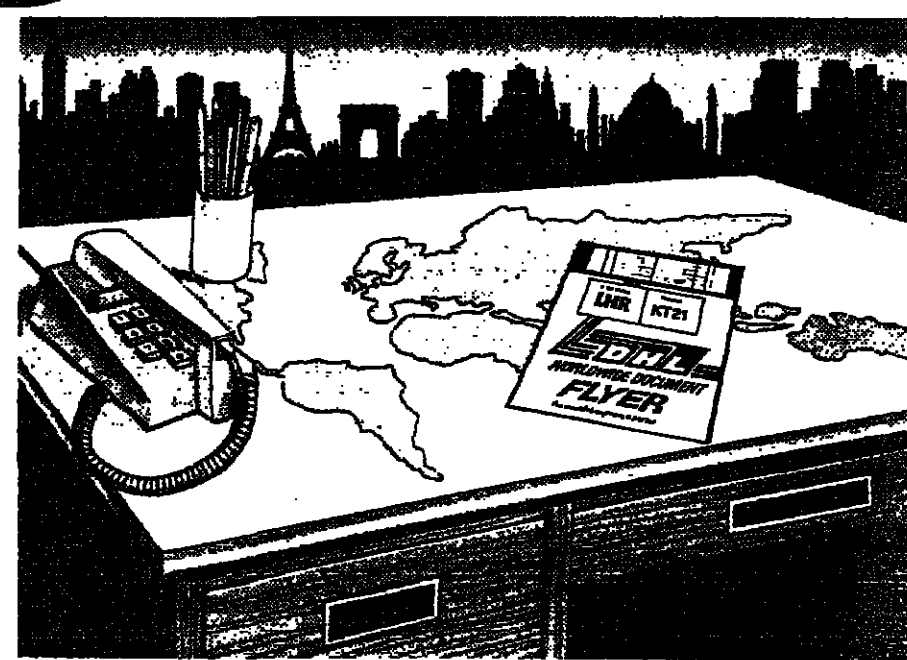
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SPORTS

Magri ends Mercedes' reign as WBC flyweight champion

LONDON (R) — Eleoncio Mercedes' brief reign as World Boxing Council (WBC) flyweight champion came to an end at Wembley Tuesday night when he was stopped by Britain's Charlie Magri in the seventh round of their scheduled 12-round title fight.

Mercedes, born in the Dominican Republic but now resident in Mexico City, was left bloodied and battered as the European champion produced the finest performance of his 30-fight career in a nerve-racking contest.

Mercedes, who took the title from Mexican Freddie Castillo last November, was pulled out of the fray after one minute 14 seconds of the seventh round by the ring doctor.

He had been carrying a nasty gash under his left eye from the fourth round and every stinging Magri blow made the blood run faster from that cut and another over the eye.

Ironically until the cuts, Mercedes had looked every bit as impressive as Magri and was probably level on points at the finish.

War was declared from the opening bell of the fight and Magri narrowly won the first round thanks to a furious assault in the last minute which had the champion covering up against the ropes.

While Magri was looking to land one big blow, Mercedes kept the safety switch in his right hand in the on position. But his lightning left jab repeatedly found the challenger's chin.

Magri switched his attack to the

body in the third and fourth rounds but the dancing Mercedes was often an elusive target, skipping nimbly out of range or weaving and ducking when trapped in a corner.

The fourth will long be remembered as one of the best ever rounds in world championship boxing.

Magri and Mercedes stood toe to toe in the middle of the ring trading punches. When the champion was finally forced to step back, blood was streaming down his left cheek. The fatal blow had been struck.

A change of tactics almost brought Magri the title in the fifth. Four sledgehammer hooks to the body—astonishing punches for a flyweight—took the wind out of Mercedes and the champion was

left helpless as the Briton unleashed a flurry of unanswered blows.

But again Mercedes came back and he had Magri in trouble in the sixth. The challenger seemed unable to anticipate the Mercedes jab although the champion was having trouble seeing out of his damaged eye.

The doctor inspected the wounds during the interval and although he allowed Mercedes to continue he had no hesitation in calling a halt as Magri immediately went back to work on the eye.

Magri, 26, has now won 28 of his 30 contests. Mercedes' record shows 11 wins, seven losses and two draws.

Both men weighed 111½ pounds (51.5 kgs).

Sheffield Wednesday reaches English F.A. Cup semi-finals

LONDON (R) — Sheffield Wednesday became the last club to reach the English Football Association (F.A.) Cup semi-finals when they crushed Burnley 4-0 in their replay Tuesday night to earn a clash with Brighton in the last four.

A crowd of some 40,000 at Sheffield were given plenty to shout about as Wednesday, coached by former England star Jack Charlton, opened a 3-0 half time lead in the all-second division match

and added two more after the break.

Gary Shelton scored the first goal after 17 minutes when a terrible back pass by Ray Flynn gave him an open goal to fire at. He added the second 11 minutes later and Gary Megson made it 3-0 with a penalty in the 41st minute.

Andy McCulloch headed the fourth home in the 57th minute and also added the fifth five minutes from time. The teams drew 1-1 at Burnley last Saturday.

Wednesday meet Brighton on the neutral north London Highbury home of Arsenal in one of the April 16 semi-finals. Arsenal play the favourites, Manchester United, at Villa Park in the other.

Arsenal had a disappointing 2-1 first division loss to Birmingham Tuesday night but Everton shrugged off their heartbreaking, injury time 1-0 defeat to Manchester United in the Cup on Saturday by beating Southampton 2-0.

Amarnath leads spirited Indian revival against West Indies

PORT-OF-SPAIN (R) — Mohinder Amarnath hit his second half-century of the match to lead a spirited Indian revival in the second cricket test against West Indies at the Queens Park Oval Tuesday.

But the West Indians, 219 runs ahead on first innings, remained firmly in control with one day left to play.

India ended the fourth day on 169 for two. The West Indians, replying to India's first innings total of 175, had earlier taken their first innings score to 394.

Amarnath, a 34-year-old all-rounder, played a dour and determined innings to be 54 not out at the close and had already put on 37 runs for the third wicket with Dilip Vengsarkar, not out 20.

Earlier, Sunil Gavaskar and Anshuman Gaekwad had given India a solid start, putting on 63 for the first wicket. But the major contribution India must have expected from Gavaskar, who had made at least 50 in each of his previous four tests here, was not forthcoming.

He was out for 32 after being given "lives" at 13 and 18. He was finally dismissed by giant pace bowler Joel Garner who had him caught behind off an edged drive.

Gavaskar had earlier been dropped in the slips by Vivian Richards off Holding — a difficult chance low to his left—and then Holding missed an easy catch off a lofted drive to mid-off when Malcolm Marshall made a ball stop and lift.

The West Indians' efforts to bowl out their opponents swiftly were hampered by their fourth paceman, veteran Andy Roberts, being off the field with a temperature in the closing stages.

The pitch had in any case become so tranquil that the West Indians' last pair, Holding and Garner, were able to amass 48 runs for the final wicket at the start of the day.

Marshall nevertheless generated a lot of pace early on, but in striving for that extra yard bowled 10 no-balls. Holding was also called eight times and bowled his

second spell, into the wind, at reduced pace.

The docility of the pitch was well illustrated by the fact that the second Indian wicket fell to the gentle off-spin of Larry Gomes who had Gaekwad caught for 35 after he had resisted the might of the pace attack for over three-and-a-quarter hours.

The West Indians clearly believe that Amarnath is still vulnerable to the short ball and Marshall laid down a barrage.

Amarnath hooked the first one to the boundary but was later hit on the helmet by another short delivery which raced away for four leg-byes.

West Indies began the day at 335 for seven and Indian all-rounder Kapil Dev made that 340 for eight with his 200th wicket in 50 test matches when he bowled Roberts for nine.

Only two other Indian bowlers have taken 200 test wickets, both of them spinners. Bishen Bedi tops the list 266 and Bhagwat Chandrasekhar took 242.



German photographer wins sports picture award

STUTTGART (DaD) — Eugen Zimmermann, 40, has been a successful sports photographer for 10 years, but he had never entered a competition until last year. Then, he sent in a selection of his work to the World Press Photograph Competition, and one picture, taken during the German women's gymnastic championships, was awarded first place in the sports category. The nine-member selection panel comprised journalists and photo journalists from Finland, Czechoslovakia, the People's Republic of China, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Soviet Union, France, Britain, the Netherlands and the USA. The competition attracted 750 entrants who submitted a total of 4,377 photographs.

Elter defeats Manson in WCT tourney

MUNICH, West Germany (R) — Local hero Peter Elter beat American Bruce Manson 7-6, 4-6, 6-4 in the Munich World Championship Tennis (WCT) tournament Tuesday and looked set for a second round clash with top seed Ivan Lendl of Czechoslovakia. Elter, labouring under a stomach muscle strain, looked nervous in the first two sets but soon regained his form and eliminated Manson in two hours.

Hanika beats Mascarin in Boston

BOSTON (R) — West Germany's Sylvia Hanika used her powerful forehand to good effect in beating American Susan Mascarin (U.S.) 6-3, 6-3 in the opening round of the \$150,000 Boston tennis tournament Tuesday.

Earlier, sixth-seeded American Barbara Potter had cruised to a 6-1, 6-2 triumph over compatriot Barbara Hallquist.

Hanika, seeded four, slammed home three service return winners to get the break in the fourth game of the first set and jumped into a 3-0, 40-0 lead in the second before the 18-year-old Mascarin fought back to win nine of the next ten points.

But Hanika reasserted control to play out the match.

Andrea Jaeger, the top seed, withdrew from the tournament only minutes before the start of play Tuesday night, saying she was

troubled by an old leg injury.

In other first round matches, second-seed Tracy Austin beat Britain's Jo Durie 7-5, 6-3 and third-seed Wendy Turnbull of Australia beat Ann Kiyomura of the U.S. 6-1, 6-1.

Austin had a sluggish start and fell behind 4-0 before taking nine

of the next ten games against Durie.

Turnbull's victory took just 51 minutes.

In later matches involving Americans, Billie Jean King beat Anne White 6-2, 6-2 and Kathleen Horvath defeated Jennie Klich 6-2, 6-3.

Wimbledon prize money increased

LONDON (R) — Wimbledon prize money this year will be just under one million sterling (\$1.51 million), an increase of almost 70 per cent.

Giving details of the championships to be staged from June 20 to July 3, Brian Burnett, chairman of the All England Lawn Tennis Club and championships committee, said that the men's champion would receive £66,000 (\$99,660) and the winner of the women's singles £60,000 (\$90,600).

Last year the men's champion received £41,667 (\$62,501) and the women's winner £37,500

(\$56,625). The overall prize money of £978,211 (\$1,477,098) this year is £384,845 (\$581,115) up on the 1982 figure.

Last year Wimbledon handed over a surplus of more than £1.5 million (\$2,265 million) to the British Lawn Tennis Association for the development of the game in Britain.

Burnett said Tuesday that because of the considerable financial success of last year's championships, the committee felt it right to "make a substantial increase in the players' prize money to give them a higher share of the profits."

Hagler to defend title against Scypion

PROVIDENCE, Rhode Island (R) — Marvin Hagler, the undisputed world middleweight boxing champion, will defend his title against fellow American Wilford Scypion in Providence on May 13, promoter Bob Arum said Wednesday.

It will be Hagler's seventh title

defence. On February 11 he scored a sixth-round knockout over Tony Sibson of England in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Arum said Hagler will receive a purse of \$1.25 million while Scypion will get \$325,000.

Hagler, 30, has a professional record of 56-2-2 with 47 knockouts. All six of his previous title defences have ended in knockout wins and he has not been beaten in 31 fights dating back more than seven years.

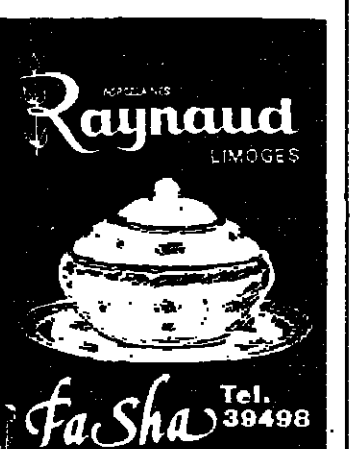
Scypion, 24, who has a 26-3 record with 20 knockouts, is the reigning U.S. Boxing Association (USBA) middleweight champion and the World Boxing Council's (WBC) top-ranked contender.

Jones returns to Formula One

LONDON (R) — Alan Jones of Australia, the 1980 world motor racing champion, will begin his return to Formula One competition in the race of champions at Brands Hatch on April 10.

Jones, 36, has been engaged to drive one of the Arrows cars this year after retiring following the 1981 season and is expected to join the Grand Prix circuit for the French event on April 17. He is currently recovering from a broken leg suffered falling off a horse.

In the race of champions, which does not count for the world championship, Jones will be opposed by the 1981 and 1982 title winners, Nelson Piquet of Brazil and Keke Rosberg of Finland.



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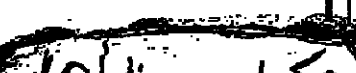
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The tradition of celebrating Mother's Day can be traced far back in time. It comes originally from England, where every fourth Sunday during Lent was known as "Mothering Sunday". Although this day was set aside for visiting one's Mother Church, it also became a widespread custom on "Mothering Sunday" for children living away from home to call on their parents with small presents. Gradually the custom developed into a celebration of the mother alone—perhaps a result of the day's original name.

In the 17th century this tradition was brought to the USA by British emigrants. Here a secular version developed, and by the beginning of the 20th century "Mothering Day" had become "Mother's Day". In 1907 a campaign was launched by an American, Anne Jarvis, to pay tribute to the mothers of the world, and the idea of "Mother's Day" was eventually adopted worldwide.

In 1909 Bing & Grondahl made the first Mother's Day plate. Henry Thelander's design, "Dog with puppies", was produced in porcelain using the famous blue underglaze technique. It was the first of its kind in the world and was a great success.

Since then it has become a tradition in many families to say "thank you" with the Mother's Day plate from Bing & Grondahl. Many things which are so difficult to put into words find expression in the imagery and artistry of this special gift, and will be remembered for years to come.

A new Mother's Day plate is issued each year. Part of a limited edition, it will not be made again. But it is never too late to begin a fine tradition.

The 1983 Mother's Day plate shows "Raccoon with cubs".
Artist: Henry Thelander. Limited edition.

JABAL EL WEIDH AL BAONFIH STREET, AL TAZIZ BUILDING.

THE Daily Crossword By James F. Burns

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ACROSS

1 Be curious
5 "Boonwill,"
9 Entreat
13 Street
15 Flat-topped hill
16 Annoy
17 Shaky and
19 Party to
20 Change for services
21 Rents
22 Moderates
24 Salad plants
26 Fragrant resin

DOWN

27 Unit of energy
28 Verve
29 Squad leader
32 Old Nick
35 Texas symbol
37 O.E.D. word
38 Careful efforts
40 River into the Seine
41 Video transmission
43 Name and Polly
44 Invite
45 Early
Ron Howard role

ACROSS

48 Phys. and surg.
47 Travesty
49 Sherwood and Arden
53 Keep one's—the grindstone
55 Flying prefix
56 Fanatic
57 Netman
58 Token payment down under?
61 "The bird—the wing"
62 A Gardner
63 Comedian Jack
64 Overtakes
65 Neotoma, a 4-
66 Tear apart

DOWN

1 Blunder
2 Movie actor
3 Richard
4 Water-proofed
5 Opposite of flow
5 Gives out
6 Throws
7 After boy or girl
8 Spaniards
9 Trojan king

ACROSS

10 Howling success in movies?
11 Lily plant
12 Longings
14 Wooded
18 Want
23 Nota
25 Incensed
26 N.C. school
28 Cream
30 Hurt
31 Minerals
32 Bristle
33 War god
34 Gabe about one's work
36 Soak
38 Indian babies
39 That
42 Aquatic bird
43 Dry gulch
46 A Copperfield
48 Hammer
49 Not so many
50 Plumber's wire
51 Shroud of—
52 Shagger
53 Fasten
54 Pelion's partner
55 Competent
58 Actress Mary
60 Distant

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ECONOMY

Government gives modest boost to Britons' budgets

LONDON (R) — Britain's Conservative government has given a modest boost to family budgets, but no clear signal that a general election is at hand.

Finance Minister Geoffrey Howe's annual budget made net tax cuts of about £1.6 million (\$2.4 million) without attempting any powerful stimulus of an economy in which 13.7 per cent of workforce is unemployed.

The battle against inflation — now down to 4.9 per cent a year — remained the government's first priority, he told the House of Commons.

Politicians were watching closely for clues about the plans of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who has been in office for nearly four years and must call a general election this year or early next.

Most felt that Sir Geoffrey's cautious budget made a June election unlikely and the odds on October, already the most probable date, had grown stronger.

Opposition parties quickly attacked Sir Geoffrey, saying he had failed to do anything about record unemployment.

Labour leader Mr. Michael Foot called his measures "trivial"

and utterly incapable of dealing with Britain's problems.

But the finance minister told parliament that the country was being guided, slowly but surely, to economic health.

The £121 billion (\$182 billion) budget set a government borrowing target of £8 billion (\$12 billion).

At 2.75 per cent of gross domestic product, that is one of the lowest ratios in the Western world and key element in the Conservatives' fight against inflation.

Sir Geoffrey raised income tax thresholds, tax relief for mortgage payments, pensions and family allowances.

The most marked change was a 14 per cent increase in personal tax allowances which will stop income tax altogether for more than one million low-income Britons and save an average household about £2 (\$3) a week.

Levies on tobacco, alcohol and petrol were all raised by a bit less than the inflation of the past year.

Businessmen generally welcomed a reduction in payroll tax.

A fairly accurate outline of the budget had been leaked to the press over the past week, and investors had reacted in advance,

sending prices on the London stock market to record levels.

Hours before the budget, Britain's four major banks reduced their base lending rates to 10.5 per cent from 11 per cent.

The budget calculations were made against the background of uncertainty about world oil prices, an important factor because of the revenue Britain gets from North Sea wells and the effect a major price change would have on the value of sterling.

Sir Geoffrey told parliament he would be ready to act quickly if a sharp drop in oil prices endangered his financial strategy.

Excise duty on liquor, tobacco and petrol was raised broadly in line with inflation.

The extra 25 pence (37 cents) on liquor raises the average price of a bottle of whisky to £6.25 (\$9.45).

Bottles of wine, up five pence (seven cents), start at around

£1.85 (\$2.79) a bottle.

Beer, sold by the pint in British bars, will now cost about 85 pence (\$1.28), depending on the brew.

The price of a cheaper packet of 20 cigarettes is up to 97 pence (\$1.46).

Premium-grade petrol will cost £1.72 (\$2.60) a gallon.

Meanwhile, the government announced plans Tuesday to set up several freeports, areas with customs-free status, to see whether they attract extra business to Britain.

Sir Geoffrey Howe told parliament: "Freeports are a new trading concept for the United Kingdom and I regard it as essential to make a careful test of the facilities they offer."

He said sites have not been chosen for the freeports.

Goods can be manufactured, stored and exported without payment of customs duties in freeports.

LONDON STOCK MARKET

LONDON (R) — Equities closed easier in quiet trading on profit-taking. In the government bond market the new convertible stock announced on Monday was exhausted on its debut, dealers said. The F.T. index at 1500 Wednesday was down 3.1 at 670.5.

After a delayed start to trading in government bonds, as a result of interest in the new stock, the £1 billion 10½ per cent convertible 1986 issue was exhausted at £26, part paid, dealers said. Otherwise trading was quiet with longs around ¼ point lower reflecting switching into the new stock, they added.

Gold shares showed losses stretching to \$4 and North Americans were easier.

Equities reacted to recent strength and showed net falls ranging to 10p but ICI was unchanged at 398 and Unilever was 5p up at 845. Buildings were weak on disappointment over the lower than expected mortgage tax relief ceiling increase, they added.

Banks eased between 5p and 10p and insurances showed smaller falls. Oils were mixed with Shell 4p up at 452 while B.P. was 4p lower at 330 ahead of results Thursday.

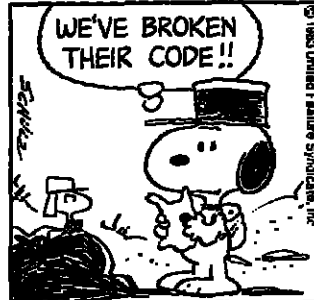
Thomas tilling was down 11p at 136 following annual results while BTR, Rowntree MacKintosh and Turner and Newall were all higher after their annual figures.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--|
| One sterling | 1.5073/83 | U.S. dollars | |
| One U.S. dollar | 1.2233/36 | Canadian dollars | |
| | 2.3857/67 | West German marks | |
| | 2.6475/85 | Dutch guilders | |
| | 2.0525/45 | Swiss francs | |
| | 46.62/72 | Belgian francs | |
| | 6.8000/8200 | French francs | |
| | 1416.00/1418.00 | Italian lire | |
| | 237.30/45 | Japanese yen | |
| | 7.4220/40 | Swedish crowns | |
| | 7.1250/70 | Norwegian crowns | |
| | 8.5920/45 | Danish crowns | |
| One ounce of gold | 421.50/422.50 | U.S. dollars | |

Peanuts



Mutt 'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq, C. Itoh sign \$10m contract

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq Tuesday signed a \$10 million contract with Japan's C. Itoh Company for the construction of a maintenance workshop for gas-fed power stations in Baghdad, the Iraqi News Agency reported.

FAO will seek \$451m budget

ROME (R) — The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) will seek a \$451.6 million budget for the agency next year, and \$85 million increase on this year's \$366.6 million. An FAO statement said Director-General Edouard Saouma told representatives of the 152 member nations Tuesday his proposals meant "practically zero growth" after allowing for exchange rate fluctuations.

Soviet economic growth flags

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet economic growth rates flagged in February after a strong showing the month before, which prompted speculation about a lasting upturn in output and productivity. Figures published Wednesday by the central statistics board showed that industrial production in the first two months of the year had increased by 5.6 per cent compared with the same period last year. Although high, this figure was a significant drop from the 6.3 per cent growth rate registered in January.

Arab exports to U.S. drop

RIYADH (OPECNA) — U.S. imports from 12 Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa declined to \$10 billion in 1982, from \$17.21 billion in 1981 and \$17.3 billion in 1980. According to the Financial Gazette of Jeddah, figures compiled by the U.S. Commerce Department showed that Saudi Arabia provided 74 per cent of the imports — mainly oil products. The paper said U.S. exports to the countries increased by 11 per cent to \$13.6 billion in 1982, from \$12.1 billion in 1981 and \$9.8 billion in 1980, with Saudi Arabia accounting for two-thirds. The countries involved include those in the Gulf, the Yemens, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Iraq and some North African nations.

U.K. royals get 4.7% pay rise

LONDON (R) — Britain's royal family got a 4.7 per cent pay rise Tuesday, which is just below the inflation rate and was described as "very modest" by Buckingham Palace. The palace said the government allocated £4.83 million (\$7.25 million) of public money this year to cover the official expenses of the royal family.

Kenya to encourage oil companies

NAIROBI (R) — Kenya, which has been searching for oil without success for 20 years, is to boost incentives for oil exploration companies, President Daniel Arap Moi said Tuesday.

Soviets refuse to pay transit fees

ANKARA (R) — Soviet merchant ships are still refusing to pay transit fees in the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits despite an 80 per cent cut which Turkey introduced in the charges last month, shipping sources in Istanbul said Tuesday.

Pressure mounts on EMS currencies

PARIS (R) — Pressure mounted again on the weaker currencies of the European Monetary System (EMS) Wednesday and was expected to persist at least until France and West Germany announced their new cabinets, government and banking sources said. In Frankfurt the French franc eased to 35.025 marks per 100 after 35.38 Tuesday and the Belgian franc fell to 5.115 marks per 100 from 5.204. The mark was fixed sharply higher in Paris at 285.96 francs per 100 marks compared with Tuesday's 283.05 fix, but well below its EMS ceiling of 289.85. In relatively calm trading, no central bank intervention was necessary in Frankfurt or Paris to keep the weak EMS currencies inside their official 2.25 per cent fluctuation band.

Ankara vows to intervene in troubled private banks

ANKARA (R) — The Turkish government, which this week sacked the top management of two private banks, will intervene in other banks if the need arises, Finance Minister Adnan Baser Kafaloglu said Wednesday.

The Finance Ministry announced Tuesday that the executive boards of the middle-ranking Istanbul Bankasi and Hisarbank had been dismissed and replaced by officials from the State Agriculture Bank as part of a shake up of the troubled banking system.

Officials said measures were also being prepared to intervene in the smaller Isci Kredi Banki. "When they (other banks) get into trouble we won't hesitate to take similar action," Mr. Kafaloglu told the national consultative assembly appointed by Turkey's military rulers.

He was speaking in a debate on

a draft law which if approved by the assembly will give the cabinet authority to alter, abolish or renew by decree most of the laws governing the financial sector.

Mr. Kafaloglu has promised to overhaul the banking system since it was plunged into crisis by the collapse last summer of Turkey's largest brokerage house, Banker Kastelli.

Kastelli and other brokers sold bank certificates of deposits and bonds in the absence of a proper capital market. They competed with Turkey's 40 retail banks for savers' deposits, sending interest rates for depositors over 50 per cent and borrowers' rates as high as 80 per cent.

When Kastelli crashed and most brokers went out of business, interest rates tumbled along with public confidence in the banking system and deposits at the banks fell away sharply. They have since staged a moderate recovery.

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, MAR. 17, 1983

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A time when your creative ideas should be used to advantage. You are able to improve relationships with others so there is a greater harmony in the future.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Get together with congenials and enjoy amusements during spare hours. Put talent to work and get fine results.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Look over your environment and make improvements where needed. Improve your health and accomplish more.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) A conference with associates will pave the way to more success in the future. Strive for increased happiness.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) A good time to elevate your thinking where money is concerned and then you can enjoy more prosperity.

LEO (July 22 to Aug. 21) Engage in more social activities after business matters are handled properly. Use that smile more. Be wary of outsiders.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Gain the advice of financial experts so that you can advance more quickly. Draw up a campaign of action.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Consult with an influential person who can assist you in your career. Much good can come of this in the future.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Become more active in civic affairs and get excellent results. Obtain the guidance you need from higher-ups.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You should be highly inspired now and can easily gain your fondest aspirations. Arrange for a future trip.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Use your hunches where loved one is concerned and you come out a winner. A good time to make plans for the future.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Meet with associates and make better arrangements for the future. Take health treatments that will perk you up.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Take time to make your environments more comfortable. Come to a better understanding with co-workers early in the day.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she will be one of those persons who can envision the highest results of any undertaking and know its true potential, plus knowing the needs of others. Be sure to equip your progeny with the finest education.

"The Stars impel, they do not compel." What you make of your life is largely up to you!

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, MAR. 18, 1983

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Make long-range plans to gain your fondest aims in the future. Accept conflicting views you may have with opponents in a philosophical manner. Be more thoughtful of others.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Discuss with associates any new ideas you have and they can be helpful to you. Don't force any issues with family members.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Handling regular duties in a precise manner can lead to a greater income. Come to a fine agreement with co-workers.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Get in touch with those whom you want to enjoy more pleasure with in the days ahead. Make this a worthwhile day.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) Make plans to have a greater income in the future. Allow time to engage in recreational activities you enjoy.

LEO (July 22 to Aug. 21) Good day to contact relatives and allies and gain cooperation for a worthwhile plan you have in mind. Discuss it wisely.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Fine day for making new investments, after careful study. Concentrate on how you can be more productive in the future.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Use diplomacy instead of forcefulness with loved one and have increased harmony. Evening is fine for being with good friends.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Get in touch with experts in your own field of endeavor and improve your plans for the future with their aid.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Know what your true aims are and then you can gain them by making wise moves and decisions. Use common sense.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Analyze your true position and make plans to have a greater income in the days ahead. Relax at home tonight.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) A clever person can give you some pointers on a new project you have in mind. Express happiness with loved one.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Cooperation is the keynote today, whether in personal or business dealings. Show more devotion to loved one.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she will be very artistic and should be trained along such lines for best results in lifetime. Teach how to handle money matters early in life. Spiritual training is important. A good family life in this chart.

"The Stars impel, they do not compel." What you make of your life is largely up to you!

USSR promotes gold nuggets to Western public

ZURICH (R) — The Soviet Union has begun a drive to sell gold nuggets direct to the public in an apparent move to raise foreign exchange in the West.

The windows of the Soviet Union's Wozzhod Bank in Zurich were Tuesday full of dull lumps of gold described as "masterpieces of fickle nature released from the dark womb of the earth."

In London, the bank for foreign trade of the USSR took advertisements in the Financial Times reminding investors and collectors of the "rarity, beauty and durability" of Russian gold nuggets.

The advert said the bank was also offering gold leaf for sale. The nuggets are being sold at the current market price—at present around 30 Swiss francs (\$14.5) per gramme—plus a supplement of 50 to 100 per cent for their beauty and rarity as collectors' items, a spokeswoman in Zurich said.

This makes a top price of around 2,000 francs (\$975), with smaller chunks costing considerably less. They are in their raw state, "refined in the glow of magma," according to the bank's advertisements. The Wozzhod Bank is the main outlet for the gold that the Soviet Union sells in the West to raise foreign exchange, mostly in Zurich and London.

Most consists of standard gold bars traded on international markets but some is also sold in the form of coins portraying a worker in a heroic pose before smoking factory chimneys.

The nuggets have been available for about four years but have not been prominently publicised before, the spokeswoman said.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"How would you like your coffee this morning? In a cup or intravenous?"

JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YADDD

LEBIE

NAUSED

FOISSY

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: GNOME JUROR CANDID BENIGN
Answer: What training for service in submarines has to be—UNDERGONE

WORLD

S. African journalist harassed

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African security police Wednesday conducted a surprise search of the home and office of Allister Sparks, one of the country's leading journalists.

Sparks said in an interview that five members of the police arrived unexpectedly at his suburban home and searched it thoroughly for more than two hours. He then accompanied them to his office where six officers continued the search.

Sparks, a former editor of the Rand Daily Mail in Johannesburg, is now the South African correspondent for the Washington Post, the London Observer and the Economist.

"The whole thing is a pretext for an act of intimidation," he said. Sparks added that the police said they were looking for documents in connection with an article he wrote which quoted Winnie Mandela, the wife of imprisoned African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela.

Mrs. Mandela has been banned by the South African government and as such it is against the law for her to be quoted publicly. Banned people are, however, routinely quoted in news articles outside South Africa.

Sparks said another reason he suspected the article about Mrs. Mandela was not the real reason for the security police action was

that the piece was published overseas about a year ago.

Sparks said the search of his home and office was part of a heightened government campaign to harass the press, both foreign and domestic.

"This has to be seen in the context of recent events," he said, referring to two recent incidents, the secret trial and conviction of three journalists for violating press laws and the government's prevention of reporting of a speech made in parliament.

Ironically, one of Sparks' most recent articles was on the government's efforts to tighten controls on news reporting.

The Foreign Correspondents Association of Southern Africa, of which Sparks is a member, issued a statement strongly protesting against what it said was "outrageous harassment".

Security police also questioned and searched the nearby office of Bernard Simon, who reports for the associated Press-Dow Jones business news service. Like Sparks, Simon is a South African reporter serving overseas media.

Meanwhile, security police acknowledged in a statement that Sparks was the subject of an investigation and that material had been seized in their searches.

U.S. bars Libyans from aviation, nuclear studies

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States will no longer allow Libyan students to study nuclear science or aviation courses at American schools, a U.S. Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) spokesman said Tuesday.

The decision was the latest move by Washington against the Libyan government of Col. Muammar Qaddafi.

INS spokesman Duane Austin said Tuesday the new regulation went into effect last Friday and could result in sending home young Libyans who were in the country for the sole purpose of studying subjects related to aviation or nuclear sciences.

"The secretary of state has determined that this type of training is detrimental to the security of the United States," he said, quoting from the rule which bans study of subjects such as aviation main-

tenance and flight operation.

The new rule means that U.S. embassies overseas will reject requests by Libyans "or third country nationals" acting on behalf of Libya for visas to study the subjects involved.

"The department of state will also revoke previously issued non-immigrant visas when it is determined that the purpose of the individual's travel to the United States is to engage in the prohibited activity," the INS said.

The rule could force students to go home by prohibiting changes in their immigration status, school transfer, extension of stay and employment authorization. Where the purpose is to obtain the prohibited training or education, according to the new rule.

The official Libyan news agency JANA denounced the U.S. move as racist.

Spain irritates NATO

BRUSSELS (R) — Spain's Socialist government has irritated NATO officials by deciding to attend a meeting of defence ministers next week as an observer, diplomats of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation said Wednesday.

They said Madrid's decision was embarrassing because there was no legal basis for observer status within NATO.

Although the government has frozen talks on integration in NATO's military wing, Spain remains a full member of the alliance it joined under a conservative government last May.

The Socialist administration's decision concerns a twice-yearly meeting of NATO's nuclear planning group, the main forum for talks on nuclear strategy, due to be

held in southern Portugal next Tuesday and Wednesday.

This half-way house position reflects the ambiguity of Spain's attitude towards NATO, the diplomats said.

Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez Tuesday ruled out an early referendum on NATO membership, arguing that a withdrawal could upset the delicate East-West balance in a period fraught with tension.

Some diplomats at NATO headquarters in Brussels expressed impatience with what they saw as dilatory tactics by the Spaniards.

"They want to be members of the club, draw benefits from the political consultations, but they are not ready to pay the subscription fee," one diplomat said.

Salvador human rights activist found killed

SAN SALVADOR (R) — The former president of El Salvador's human rights commission has been killed in a clash between troops and left-wing guerrillas, the army said Tuesday.

An army spokesman said that the dead woman, first thought to be a journalist, had been identified as Mariamela Garcia Villas, a founder of the commission who vanished from public life in 1980.

The announcement followed an earlier communiqué which said a black man and a woman killed in fighting Monday on the slopes of the Guazapa volcano were believed to be foreign journalists. The man has not been identified. The human rights commission,

denounced in the communiqué as an organisation "in the service of Marxism-Leninism" has frequently released details on the number of civilians murdered in El Salvador. It usually blamed the army or security forces.

Army spokesman said Garcia Villas, 42, had been identified by fingerprints.

The Armed Forces Press Committee (COPREFA) said she had been active in a campaign of disinfection by the commission before joining guerrillas fighting the U.S.-backed government.

The precision legal status of the commission is not clear. Although denounced by the army, some legal experts said Tuesday it had never been expressly banned.

China executes rapist

PEKING (R) — A peasant has been executed in the southeastern Chinese province of Fujian for raping 16 women and illegally removing contraceptive coils from women who wanted to become pregnant, an official newspaper said Wednesday.

The Guangming daily said Zhu Hui had removed coils from 83 women, violating strict birth control regulations which permit women to become pregnant only with the permission of local family planning officials.

Sixty of the women gave birth after their coils were removed, and a further 10 also became pregnant but apparently had abortions or miscarriages.

Zhu, 41, appealed against his sentence, but it was upheld by the supreme court in Peking and he was executed on Feb. 5, the paper

said. Executions in China are usually carried out by shooting.

Peasant grievances

PEKING (R) — Many peasants who complained to the central government in Peking about being persecuted were ignored or got into worse trouble for voicing their grievances, the People's Daily said Wednesday.

The Communist Party newspaper said the authorities often filed away letters of complaint without taking any action or they sometimes even showed them to the persecutors, who then took their revenge.

But it said the national constitution guaranteed the right to express grievances and officials who ignored complaints were failing to respect the democratic rights of the people.

U.S. arms dealer on bail

NEW YORK (R) — A fugitive arms dealer, extradited to the United States from Spain over the weekend, was ordered to be held on \$450,000 bail on federal arms dealing charges.

The defendant, George Korkala, 43, is charged with attempting to sell guns, ammunition and coding devices to the government of ousted Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in 1979.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Raymond Levites said the Spanish government had agreed to extradite the defendant from Madrid on condition that he be re-tried on charges of selling 10,000 machine-guns and ammunition to undercover agents posing as Latin American revolutionaries in 1979.

Korkala and co-defendant Frank Terpil, a former CIA agent, jumped bail and were tried and sentenced in absentia in 1981 to jail terms of between 17 and 53 years.

Millions of birds vanish mysteriously in Pacific

WASHINGTON (R) — More than 16 million birds have mysteriously vanished from the Pacific atoll of Christmas Island, the first recorded disappearance of an entire island adult bird population, a California scientist has said.

Ralph Schreiber, curator of ornithology at the National History Museum of Los Angeles county, said 14 million sooty terns, at least 1.5 million wedge-tailed shearwaters and one million birds of 16 other species had left their island home in the second half of 1982.

Thousands of the birds' nestlings had been left behind to die, he told Reuters Tuesday.

Dr. Schreiber, who has studied birds and mammals in the central Pacific for more than 15 years, said Christmas Island was teeming with birdlife when he visited it last July but was virtually deserted on a second visit in November.

Speculating that a drastic change in oceanic conditions might have forced the exodus, he said: "I'm sure that many of them will have died."

He said since last April the area around Christmas Island had experienced unusual climatic changes causing the sea level to rise about 18 centimetres and ocean temperatures to rise about seven degrees Fahrenheit (four degrees Centigrade).

Dr. Schreiber said this might have forced the birds' sole food supply, fish and squid, to leave the waters, luring the sooty terns, shearwaters and other birds after them.

He said similar climatic changes had probably caused mass disappearances of birds from Pacific islands many times in the past, although they had never been recorded.

Anti-rebel offensive said to be planned by Kabul

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan rebels have disrupted Kabul's electricity supplies for the third time this year as stepped-up fighting became more evident in Afghanistan, Western diplomats reported Tuesday.

They said more Soviet and Afghan troops were being redeployed including a Soviet column in Jalalabad, the provincial capital closest to the Pakistan border.

With winter snow melting, the guerrillas were also attacking Soviet road convoys and making sabotage raids, they said.

The diplomats, who have access to information from missions in Afghanistan, said most of Kabul was plunged into darkness on March 9 when power pylons were blown up along a line to the capital from a hydroelectricity station in the Kabul gorge.

Electricity shortages continued for the next four days and an oil-fired power station on the outskirts of Kabul took on an increased load using up precious fuel supplies.

Diplomatic sources in Pakistan said there were power cuts in Kabul in January after rebels cut power lines last December, and the Soviet government newspaper Izvestia reported more cuts last

month, blaming guerrillas. The diplomats also said guerrillas early last month blew up a section of a pipeline carrying natural gas exports to the Soviet Union, but the damage was quickly repaired.

Rebels were also stepping up attacks on aviation targets. On March 6 a military transport plane had been shot down near Jalalabad, about 130 kilometres east of Kabul and 65 kilometres from the Pakistan border, with about 50 casualties, but there were no details of the number of dead, the diplomats said.

They said the main offices of Afghanistan's international airline, Ariana, had been bombed twice in the past month, but damage was slight. The offices adjoin the Kabul hotel where many senior Soviet advisers and military officers live.

Zia astonished

KARACHI (R) — President Mohammad Zia Ul Haq of Pakistan Tuesday described as astonishing an announcement by Bangladesh that it would normalise relations with the Soviet-backed government in Afghanistan.

Pope raps injustices

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul II Wednesday sharply criticised foreign intervention in the Salvadoran Civil War and repeated his call for a peaceful end to social injustices in Central America.

Speaking at his first general audience since his return last Thursday from a nine-day tour of the region, the pontiff also renewed his attack on attempts to superimpose political objectives on the "evangelical content" of the Catholic Church.

His homily, delivered before an estimated 13,000 faithful gathered in the Vatican's audience hall and St. Peter's basilica, summed up the lessons drawn from the most politically delicate mission of his much-travelled pontificate.

Clearly affected by the mass poverty and elite wealth that he witnessed in an eight-nation journey through one of the world's most troubled regions, the Pope demanded an end to inequality and denounced foreign meddling.

Central America's outdated social and economic systems "are unjust and must be changed by adequate reforms, observing the principles of social democracy," the Pope said.

Brazilian socialist stages dramatic political return

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Brazil's most prominent socialist, who fled a military coup in 1964 and spent the next 15 years in exile, completed an astonishing political comeback Tuesday when he was sworn in as governor of Rio de Janeiro State.

At a noisy and colourful ceremony here, Leonel Brizola, once the ruling generals' most hated and feared enemy, took charge of the country's second most important political power base for a four-year term.

Mr. Brizola, 61, was one of 22 state governors who last November won elections widely interpreted as a vital stage in the government's programme for restoring full democracy.

As a fiery orator and former governor of Rio Grande do Sul State, he was a prime target in the 1964 coup which ousted his left-leaning brother-in-law, President Joao Goulart.

He returned from exile under a government amnesty in 1979, and the prospect of his victory in November was enough to send tremors through right-wing sections of the armed forces.

Ten of the 22 governors taking office Tuesday were from the opposition, which won almost all the vast country's richest and most industrialised states.

2 Italian detectives in U.K. to probe old case

LONDON (R) — Two Italian detectives probing the suspected murder in Italy of wealthy Briton Jeannette May Wednesday conferred with British police commanders in London.

Detectives Carlo Corsetti and Giacomo Battaglia plan to question about a dozen people in connection with the 1980 deaths of Mrs. May, former wife of British banker Evelyn de Rothschild, and her friend Gabriella Guerini.

Their skeletal remains were found by a bear hunter in a thicket near the hill town of Camerino in central Italy 14 months after they disappeared in a snowstorm.

The London Sunday Times newspaper said the women were murdered by Sardinian bandits after a kidnap plot went wrong.

Italian and British press reports have said there were possible links with other major unsolved crimes as well as the scandal over the London death of Vatican banker Roberto Calvi.

Mrs. May, 41, was the wife of British chain store executive Stephen May.

THE WEEKEND CROSSWORD

UP THE LADDER

By William Carter

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Diagrams

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NEWS IN BRIEF

3 Baha'is hanged in Iran

LONDON (R) — Three leading members of the Baha'i faith were hanged last weekend in the southern Iranian city of Shiraz, the national spiritual assembly of the Baha'is of the United Kingdom said Wednesday. It said the three, one of them a woman, were among 22 Baha'is sentenced to death last month by an Islamic court in Shiraz.

'Dallas' actress has heart attack

LOS ANGELES (R) — Barbara Bel Geddes, who plays Miss Ellie in the television series "Dallas", was in stable condition Wednesday after heart surgery, a studio spokesman said. Miss Bel Geddes, 60, underwent the 4½ hour operation to bypass blocked arteries after complaining of chest pains, the spokesman said. Hospital authorities said Miss Bel Geddes, matriarch of the Ewing oil family in the television series, apparently suffered a heart attack before Tuesday night's operation. She entered Cedars Sinai Hospital last Saturday because of chest pains and the pains increased Tuesday, the studio spokesman said.

Japanese police find fire bomb

SASEBO, Japan (R) — Japanese police said Wednesday they found an unexploded fire bomb inside a U.S. Navy ammunition dump, five days before an American aircraft carrier begins a controversial visit. Police said the device, found in a sasebo warehouse containing an unspecified amount of ammunition, was apparently planted by left-wing radicals opposed to the visit of the 90,000-ton nuclear-powered Enterprise.

Thai parliament defies general